

THE SENATE SPOTLIGHT

Georgia State Senate Newsletter



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Study Committee work commences



Study Committees to look at everything from tax reform to the removal of mercury switches

Amidst a slew of legislation passed by the General Assembly in 2006, several laws were passed that received little media attention or spotlight. These resolutions and bills created Senate and House Study Committees that will explore many of the issues currently affecting Georgia's citizens. Some of the notable 2006 interim study committees shall include:

Comprehensive State Trauma Services Joint Study Committee – created by Senate Resolution 785, this Study Committee will look at the need to maintain and expand Georgia's trauma care services throughout the State. Currently, Georgia has four level-one trauma centers in Atlanta, Augusta, Macon and Savannah. Appointed to this study committee are Chairman Cecil Staton, and Senators David Adelman, Greg Goggans and Renee Unterman.

Limited Taxation Study Committee – will investigate measures to provide for meaningful limits on state government taxing and spending powers, so as to expend revenue only as necessary. Other growing states already have implemented reductions by providing that annual growth in state expenditures cannot exceed a percentage that reflects ordinary citizens' personal income, and providing that excess revenues are refunded to taxpayers. The Committee will be chaired by Senator Mitch Seabaugh, and includes Senators Ronnie Chance, Joseph Carter, Chip Pearson and Chip Rogers.

ATM Safety Study Committee – will determine if and how ATMs can be made safer. Chairman John Wiles introduced legislation last session that would have required ATMs operated in Georgia to be fitted with a 911 call button. Senators John Bulloch, George Hooks, Ed Tarver and Nancy Schaefer also were appointed to this Study Committee.

Grassroots Arts Program Study Committee – will determine how to best fund arts activities across the State to enhance community life and provide valuable enrichment to students through various arts programs. The Committee is chaired by Senator Jack Hill, and includes Senators Ed Tarver and Nancy Schaefer.

"Many people think we have a part-time legislature. The truth is we work for our constituents 365 days a year.

Study committees are important, as many issues continue to face Georgia even when the General Assembly is not in session." Senate President Pro Tempore Eric Johnson

Introducing... Director Jill Fike of Senate Research



Jill Fike has been named Director of the Senate Research Office. As many of you know, Jill previously served as the Deputy Director of Senate Research for over three years.

With more than 15 years of legislative experience, Jill also served as a legislative analyst for the Florida House of Representatives. Her areas of expertise include Rules, Health and Human Services, Economic Development, Appropriations, Regulated Industries, Finance, Banking and Financial Institutions, Education and Higher Education. She also served ten years with the Florida

departments of Banking and Finance and Professional Regulation.

"We are pleased to name Jill as the Director of Senate Research," said President Pro Tem Eric Johnson. "She is skilled at analyzing legislation and problem-solving, and she provided positive guidance to the Senate Research Office as its acting director. The members of the Senate Administrative Committee look forward to the direction she will take in her new role."

Spotlight on... This month in Georgia History

July 7, 1742 – English and Spanish forces skirmish on St. Simons Island in an encounter that would come to be known as the *Battle of Bloody Marsh*.

July 2, 1898 – According to common folklore concerning the origin of "Brunswick Stew", the first pot of this famous concoction was made on St. Simons Island on this day.



July 29, 1927 – President Franklin D. Roosevelt arrived in Warm Springs for his eighth visit to the state that quickly was becoming his "second home."

July 20, 1976 – Atlanta Brave Hank Aaron hit his 755th and final home run. His record for the most career home runs still stands today.

July 4, 1982 – Young Harris graduate Ronnie Milsap made the top of the charts with his hit song, "Any Day Now."

July 19, 1996 – The eyes of the world were focused on Georgia, as the opening ceremonies for the 1996 Summer Olympics were held in Olympic Stadium (often referred to as "the Ted" nowadays).

July 18, 2000 – At age 61, U.S. Sen. Paul Coverdell died unexpectedly in Atlanta. Former director of the U.S. Peace Corps, Coverdell was first elected to the U.S. Senate in 1992 and again in 1998.



Employee Spotlight on... Angela Touhy



What is your current job and/or assignments?

I am the Legislative Assistant to the Senate Appropriations Committee. I work for Chairman Jack Hill, as well as the nine Subcommittee Chairs by scheduling all Committee meetings, and all meetings required by each Subcommittee and all state agencies to review their budgets. I am responsible for reporting out the Committee bills, primarily the budget bills. I am accountable for all of the Committee minutes. My duties also include assisting Senator Hill with district work, personal scheduling, constituent assistance and local legislation – mainly resolutions.

How did you end up at the General Assembly?

During my childhood, my mother worked in the State Office Building, which is now the CLOB. When I was 16, she helped me get a summer student job in the DHR budget office. After working there for two summers during high school, I then worked some of my senior year as an aide with the Department of Medical Assistance, which is now DCH. I began permanent employment with the State in 1986, and eventually ended up working back where I started in the DHR budget office. I remained there for 11 years, but when the office was relocated, I only stayed a short while and decided to come back to Capitol Hill. I began looking to transfer to a job back here and found that the long-time assistant for the Senate Appropriations Committee was retiring. Since I always had worked in a state budget office and was familiar with the appropriations process, Senator George Hooks, the Chairman at the time, hired me and thanks to him, that is how I came to the General Assembly.

Tell me a little about your background. Birthplace, brothers and sisters, etc.

I was born Angela Williams in Atlanta, and I grew up and still reside in Cherokee County. My mother, Betty, is a retired state employee. My father Grady passed away several years ago, and I have one sister, Suzanne. I married Bobby Touhy and we have one son named Bobby Touhy. A few months ago, my son was awarded a college football scholarship, and he will be moving away to South Carolina on August 7, where he reports for his first day of practice.

Tell us about your hobbies and/or what you enjoy doing away from work...

I have always been a runner/walker, and I have a weekly routine that I follow. I love playing with my dogs, Ginger Grant and Elway Montana, and they can't wait to jump in the car and go everywhere with me when I am running errands. But, my favorite pastime of all is spending time with my family and watching my son play football. He has been playing since he was about six years old. So, in the next few months we will be consumed with traveling from state to state as he begins his collegiate career, and I won't miss a single game!

The General Assembly can be an exciting place to work. What are some of the aspects of your position that you enjoy the most?

During the session, when it gets really hectic, I sometimes feel that my responsibilities are bigger than I am and feel overwhelmed. I somehow manage to get it all done, and afterwards, I feel very accomplished. I am always amazed watching the Senate in session. It is so interesting to me because of the decorum – the parliamentary procedures that must be followed by all the Senators. I have learned so much over the years by listening to the Senators in the well, debating bills that cover such a variety of issues that are important and impact so many lives. Most of all, I am impressed with how hard the entire Senate and staff work during the session. It is truly amazing how much work gets accomplished in such a short timeframe. Every day when I come in, I feel so fortunate to work in such a beautiful, historical place surrounded by so many hardworking professionals who are truly dedicated in their work for the State of Georgia.

Senate Budget's Spotlight on... Monthly numbers



Revenue collections by the Department of Revenue for FY 2006 increased 9.3 percent over FY 2005. For the month of June 2006 (FY 06), revenue collections totaled \$1,598,202,000 compared to \$1,523,037,000 for June 2005 (FY 05), an increase of \$75,165,000 or 4.9 percent. Also, Governor Sonny Perdue announced that a \$580 million budget surplus for FY 06 will be used to fund education and the Rainy Day Fund.

Senate Spotlight on . . . July Birthdays



HAPPY BIRTHDAY to . . .



Senator Jeff Chapman

Senator Jack Hill

Senator Valencia Seay

Senator Ed Tarver

Senator Don Thomas

John Barbour- Secretary of the Senate's Office

Jamie Martinez- Legislative Assistant

Melanie Stockwell- Executive Counsel, Pro Tem's Office

Deanna Coker- Legislative Counsel

Travis Hutchins- Fiscal Office

Jon Cooper- Senate Budget Office

Jennifer Wolford- Deputy Director, Senate Budget Office

Larry Schwartz- Legislative Counsel

Cyndi Williams- Legislative Assistant

LaRhonda Williams- Legislative Assistant

Rick Gardner- Senate Budget Office

Vallerie Trent- Legislative Counsel

Joyce Hall- Legislative Counsel

July 14th

July 15th

July 6th

July 22nd

July 14th

July 30th

July 6th

July 19th

July 4th

July 14th

July 29th

July 28th

July 16th

July 20th

July 26th

July 8th

July 10th

July 30th

SAVE THE DATE: Georgia State University will hold its annual staff appreciation BBQ on Wednesday, July 26, in room 230 of the State Capitol!!!

The Senate Spotlight is a product of the Senate Press Office. If you have a suggestion, a person you would like to nominate for the Employee Spotlight or a Senate-related article to contribute, please contact our office at 404.656.0028.

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